



Memorandum

TO: Historic Landmarks Commission

FROM: Courtney Damkroger

SUBJECT: HP02-009

DATE: June 21, 2002

The Montgomery Hotel (HL00-120)

APPROVED:

DATE:

SUBJECT: HP02-009. HISTORIC PRESERVATION PERMIT for a project located at the west side of South First street approximately 300 feet northerly of West San Carlos Street on a 0.59-gross-acre site in the CG Commercial General Zoning District for exterior changes to the Montgomery Hotel (HL00-120). (Montgomery Hotel Group LLC Owner and Developer) Council District 3. **CEQA: Exempt.**

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Montgomery Hotel Group, LLC is requesting a Historic Preservation Permit to allow exterior changes and landscaping to The Montgomery Hotel (HL00-120). The site is located in the CG Commercial General Zoning District with a San José 2020 General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of Core Area.

The City Council initiated the City Landmark proceedings for the Montgomery Hotel in May 1997 and denied its designation at a public hearing in October 1997 because the building was proposed to be demolished to create space for the Fairmont expansion. With much opposition to the demolition of this structure, the City Council, sitting as the Redevelopment Agency Board, decided instead to relocate the Montgomery Hotel. Given these circumstances, on March 1, 2000, the Historic Landmarks Commission voted unanimously (7-0-0) to nominate the Montgomery Hotel as a City Landmark. On April 3, 2001 the City Council designated the Montgomery Hotel as a City Landmark (HL00-120).

The Montgomery Hotel is the second and oldest surviving of T. S. Montgomery's South First Street commercial buildings. It is significant for its contribution to the pattern of commercial development of downtown San Jose during the early 20th century. The Montgomery Hotel is associated with both T.S. Montgomery and architect William Binder, two individuals who made significant contributions to the development of San Jose. The construction of the Hotel in San Jose in 1910 is regarded as a mark of growth and prosperity for a city anticipating an increase in business and tourism. This hotel is a four-story reinforced concrete Class "A" building said to be one of the earliest of this construction type in San Jose, and at the time, considered "absolutely fireproof."

The Director of the Redevelopment Agency of the City of San Jose approved a Site Development Permit to allow The Montgomery Hotel to be successfully moved south to its new location on January 29, 2000. The Redevelopment Agency worked in coordination with the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) to ensure that the relocation project was done as sensitively as possible in order to maintain the building's National Register eligibility. The State Historic Preservation Officer was supplied with plans and specifications for the relocation of the building. The OHP stated that the impacts to the exterior of the Montgomery Hotel were mitigated below a level of significance during the relocation.

Environmental Review

Under the provisions of Section 15331 of the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project is found to be exempt from environmental review in that the project is limited to the rehabilitation of a historical resource in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer.

ANALYSIS

The building rehabilitation project proposes to install a new wood storefront with clear and patterned glass, install a new sheet metal and glass canopy with steel rod and wood ornamental supports to match the original, install new terrazzo column cladding to match the original, repair and replace the wood trellis as required, restore existing wood double-hung windows on the north and east elevations and replace existing windows on the west and south elevations with new aluminum double-hung windows to match the original profile. The deteriorated cement plaster and the cornice structure shall be repaired and replaced as required and a new paint coating system shall be installed throughout the structure. Proposed allowable signage dimensions and locations are indicated on the plan set.

The adjacent landscaping project proposes to define the exterior space north of the building with a modern cast concrete water wall on the northern perimeter property line. The space will then be divided by a series running north-south between the water wall and the building in order to define a parking drop-off plaza at the eastern edge, a hotel lobby entrance plaza in the center and bocce ball courts at the western edge of the site. The landscape project is both compatible with and distinct from the historic resource. Planning staff recommends that landscaped screening hedges be separated from the building face in a manner that protects the historic material from water, chemical or maintenance damage.

In addition to obtaining an Historic Preservation permit the applicants are pursuing the federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits and are participating in that certification process with the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and the National Park Service (NPS). At the time of this review the applicants had received a recommendation from OHP that the building is National Register eligible and will pursue nomination. Review of the proposed rehabilitation and restoration plans is underway with these agencies. Interior rehabilitation and restoration will be subject to review from the OHP and the NPS as well.

In evaluating this proposal, the Secretary of the Interior's standards #1, 2, 6 and 9 apply and are attached. The building shall be used in a manner consistent with its original use, the character of the building is being retained with little removal of historic materials and deteriorated features will be repaired rather than replaced. The proposed new work on the exterior at the storefront level will not destroy historic material and is intended to compliment but differentiate from what would have been an original storefront. The new work is compatible in massing, size and scale.

The HLC Design Review Subcommittee saw the project at their June 19th meeting. The subcommittee voiced concern about the change in the original color of the building and the compatibility of the proposed color. Final color and material samples will be presented at the Historic Landmarks Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends that the Historic Landmarks Commission find that the proposal conforms to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and recommend approval of the proposed rehabilitation and adjacent landscaping to the Director of Planning.

Courtney Damkroger
Historic Preservation Officer

Attachments: DPR
Standards